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A Chance to Change

- **Category:** Ramadan & the Last 10 days Files
- **Source:** موقع وذكر الإسلام
- **Publication Date:** 10 Safar 1434 (12/23/12)



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Views Count: 133

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We all agree that the most dangerous deprivation is not to be able to make use of Ramadan in satisfying Allah and getting closer to Him. Ramadan is an easy great reward that is available for everyone living on earth. On the other hand, others who lie under the ground (the dead) are deprived of it.

Here, I do not intend to motivate you to perform good acts in Ramadan such as reading Quran, contemplating, giving charity, remembering Allah, praying at night, performing righteousness...etc. In fact, the wise realizes well how he can exert his utmost efforts in order to perform and increase such acts.




Instead, I motivate and urge you to hasten to a great advantage of this month.



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Such an advantage is available in other months but in Ramadan, it is easier and more distinguished.

It is the chance to change. There is no one of us but that he has bad habits and habitual acts of disobedience which he is accustomed to and which he cannot give up. However, the matter is completely different in this blessed month. Ramadan has changed many people. Fasting, praying at night and seeking the help of Allah have helped him to avoid and abandon everything that obstructs his way towards obedience. In addition, such righteous acts have helped him to leave what causes his heedlessness, being away from Allah or what keeps him away from the superior matters.

Therefore, everyone should seek change by the beginning of this blessed month. In addition, he should count his most distinguishable habits and mistakes; the habits that prevent him from sublimity and take him away from guidance. Then, he should exert great efforts to neglect them; and he should substitute them for their contradictories, such as the acts of good and improvement.

There are many bad qualities that have spread in societies and should be abandoned by the beginning of this month. The following are just some examples:

Quick anger: some people get angry for trivial matters and without thinking. Moreover, he takes such trivial matters as a pretext for hatred and enmity that may last for a long or a short time. He was supposed to disregard many of the mistakes of others that do not cause any inevitable evil consequences. This makes him more likely to live with a clear conscience and a serene mind.

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As it was reported, **Imam Ahmad or another scholar** said, "Nine tenths of happiness lie in disregarding." Thus, the chance is available for the people having such trait to start accustoming themselves to patience and calmness. In addition, the Prophet, prayers and peace of Allah be upon him, has said, "The strong man is not the one who wrestles, but the strong man is in fact the one who controls himself in a fit of rage." [Agreed upon]

«ليس الشديد بالصرعة، إنما الشديد الذي يملك نفسه عند الغضب» متفق عليه

The evil assumption: After the man says something or does something, evil assumptions surround him and different stands are taken against him because of what he has said. After that, his integrity as well as the clarity of his heart are proven. How beautiful it is to accustom ourselves to having good opinion of others and to thinking of the good justifications of their actions all the time.

As Ja'far ibn Muhammad said, "Think of seventy excuses for your brother."

However, I do not ask you to think of seventy excuses but just to think of what you can find of excuses. If you did not find any excuse, accuse yourself [of being mistaken].

Considering backbiting as an easy matter: there is an honorable man who is loved and appreciated by others and who cares about his own matters without realizing what is plotted behind his back. At such case, those who do not fear the punishment of backbiting mention his mistakes and show his defects. Thus, the view of people towards him is changed after they used to respect him and to deal with him with the best means of love as well as verbal and actual

appreciation.

Every wise person should avoid such major sin and should leave others to manage their own business. I do not think this matter is hard for the one who is truthful, especially because we are in the month of truth and virtue.

Envy: Ibn Taymiyyah said, "No one is saved from envy." This indicates that all people are afflicted with it and no one is saved from it. However, there are some who do not push it away and do not strive for abandoning it. This causes him to lose his good deeds and constructs a barrier of hatred and enmity between him and others. The truthful one does not give a chance for envy to penetrate his heart, as he loves others. In addition, he does not wish that they lose what they have of bounties. If such person felt something indicating envy against his brother, he would hasten to supplication. He would pray for him from his heart in order to cut the way of Satan and to cut the roots of this disease. Therefore, he remains a good one having a serene mind and conscience.

This month is an easy great treasure to communicate with others. It is a chance to love them, get closer to them, and being cordial towards them by congratulating them for the blessings of Allah bestowed upon them. It is also a chance to invoke Allah for them openly and secretly. Through this, the meaning of unity, compassion and mercy among people are achieved. In addition, good prevails and hatred fades away.

Smoking: By Allah, if the smoker wants to abandon such bad habit in any month other than Ramadan, he will be able to do it with strong will and determination. So, what about the one who wants to abandon it in the month of fasting? He already remains half a day without smoking. Thus, it is possible to complete his

day without it. Moreover, it is possible to keep himself busy with what is more useful for him. In addition, he can ask Allah to help him and he repeats the same the next day and every day until he is purified from it.

Listening to songs: the controversy is that people do not understand the danger of listening to songs. It blocks the way between the slave and his Lord and weakens his love to his Lord, the Almighty. In addition, it increases the broad fancies which support the prohibited love and creates the forbidden inclinations to the persons who have beautiful faces whether males or females. Do not ask about its consequences of distresses, sorrows, and difficulty of matters.

It is very appalling to listen to songs in months other than Ramadan. Thus, it is the ugliest sin to listen to them in Ramadan. It is a month for fasting the day and praying the night. In addition, the rest of the day should include remembrance, Quran, supplication, and giving charity.

These are just some examples. However, the reality is full of wrong habits and hateful practices. There are people who hoped to witness that month but they died before it started, as death was a barrier between them and their hopes. On the other hand, here you are, enjoying witnessing this month and collecting its benefits. Therefore, you should take it as a truthful start towards the pleasure of Allah, Glorified and Exalted, and after that, towards improvement and sublimity.

We should always remember the verse in which Allah Almighty says, {Verily! Allâh will not change the (good) condition of a people as long as they do not change their state (of goodness) themselves (by committing sins and by being

ungrateful and disobedient to Allâh). } [Surat Ar-Ra'd 13:11]

{إِنَّ اللَّهَ لَا يُغَيِّرُ مَا بِقَوْمٍ حَتَّىٰ يُغَيِّرُوا مَا بِأَنفُسِهِمْ} الرعد: 11

Transliteration: inna Allaha la yughayyiru mabiqawmin hatta yughayyiroo
mabianfusihim

I ask Allah the Most High, the All-Powerful to accept our deeds and yours in this month by His Grace and Generosity. I ask Him to accept fasting, praying at night, meditating on the Quran, and all our deeds of righteousness. I ask Him to change our negative sides, defects, and mistakes. He [Alone] is Worthy [of this plea] and is Able to bring this pass.

Prayers and peace of Allah be upon our Prophet and Master, Muhammad, and upon all his family and companions.

By Hamid Al-'Alyâni
What a Religion

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